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REVIEWS OF RECENT EDUCATIONAL WORKS

History

AN INTRODUCTORY HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By C. R. L. Fletcher. (Murray. 7s. 6d.)

MR. FLETCHER has not written this book for the classroom, but for all that we commend it to the notice of schoolmasters sick of the arid typical text-book, with its dates and its non-human treatment of a pre-eminently human theme. "The great thing to do in preparing a lesson," a teacher was once heard saying to a colleague, "is to make a skeleton of the king." The text-book makers go farther: they reduce the whole past to a skeleton. This ideal is passing, and we are nearing the time when examination lists will no longer be regarded as the test of efficient teaching.

Here is a book containing to a great extent the old history-stuff, but written with vivacity and intelligence. "My own view," writes the author, "is that English history should be an inheritance of childhood; that its legends and its romance should grow into our thoughts from very early years, and should expand themselves with the expansion of our minds; that we should feel history and dream of it rather than learn it as a lesson." This is not the author's complete view, as one soon finds on turning from the preface to the book itself. Take his treatment, for instance, of Henry II.'s reign, and it is evident that his intention is to bring out the value to us of this king's legislative reforms, adding that "it is these [reforms], and not his quarrel with the Church or his vast continental dominions, that make Henry's reign one of such supreme importance."

Not only, then, is the pupil to feel history, he is also to *think* it, and gradually, as his knowledge grows, to substitute for the pseud-ideas of the past the real romance of orderly evolution. He is to go back in time until the complexities of modern institutions, laws, and social usages are seen to be elaborations of some quite simple principles.

It is a pity the author did not make his concluding chapters more interesting by taking a leaf out of Professor Reich's "Atlas." Had he done so his account of the Wars of the Roses would have sustained the interest of the rest of the book. It is difficult for Mr. Fletcher to be dull, but either because he regards these wars as too senseless for the historian to heed, or because he despises too much the help of mnemonic aids, it is certain that the interest somehow droops a little.

KING ALFRED TO EDWARD I. Vol. I. By Beatrice A. Lees. (Black.)

We hope no *one* way will ever come to be held as the proper way of teaching history. Unfortunately, because of the constricting power of examinations, school history has come to mean a certain selection of facts. Now a reaction is setting in, and the teacher is beginning to assert his right not only to make his own selection, but also to present to his class those aspects of the subject that most appeal to him.

Beatrice Lees has adopted the biographical method—history in biography is the sub-title of this volume—and her aim is to weave the life and works of repre-

sentative men into the fabric of their age, or, more accurately, to indicate that an age or movement is merely the application or illustration of the thoughts of its master minds. The inarticulate crowd, the natural and artificial environment, and the inherited treasures of knowledge are felt to be on this view the stage on which the protagonists strut out their little day.

Of course this method has its defects, because in history the effects always contain elements not discernible in the causes, so that every age, like a complex chemical substance, is something more than an aggregation of the qualities of the separate elements composing it.

The writer of this volume guards herself against this assumption, and refers to her types as representative of their age—an inconsistency from which there is no escape. For instance, Robert Grosseteste, Adam de Marisco, and Simon de Montfort are chosen as embodying that wonderful thirteenth century, the century in which, in every province of human activity, there was manifested a desire to remove the old landmarks. What created this new spirit falls beyond the reach of the school-historian; and the habit of regarding now the age as the creator of great men, and now great men as the creatures of their times, is only seemingly inconsistent.

We have here, then, not only history in biography, but biography in history, and we commend the book to teachers tired of sitting by the dry wells of the old school.

A JUNIOR HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By Charles and Mary Oman. (Arnold. 2s.)

"It is hoped that nothing essential has been omitted, though in the narrow space of 250 pages much compression must necessarily take place." Clearly the authors' idea of a junior history is a *précis* of a larger book, and presumably a still more junior book would be a *précis* of this, and would probably sum up the reign of Henry II. somewhat as follows: "Henry reigned for thirty-five years; he quarrelled with the Church, conquered Ireland, and died of a broken heart." This is strange doctrine. Further on in the short but remarkable preface we read: "The last three hundred years of the *Annals* of England have been dealt with at somewhat greater length . . . as being the *part* of the history of his own country which the young student *should first endeavour to master*" (italics ours). We are to believe, then, that the accomplished authors of this book really think that the beginner in history is more interested in Disraeli and the Eastern question than in castles and knights and the crusaders, and that, further, this little book will help him to understand the history of England since the Reformation.

Professor Oman has forgotten his school-days, and has no knowledge whatever of the way in which history should be taught, nor of the purposes for which it is taught.

THE "TEMPLE" HISTORY READERS. By M. T. Yates. (Dent. 1s. 9d.)

This book is advertised as being "profusely illustrated." It is quite true that it is replete with—to carry on the

style of the advertiser—imaginative interpretations of well-known incidents. There is much spirit in the drawings, and the artists have been careful to avoid violating the historical sense.

A FIRST HISTORY OF ENGLAND. Part V., 1603-1689.
By C. L. Thomson. (Horace Marshall.)

"For, to make history living to young pupils, it must necessarily be administered orally in the form of stories." This book is intended to be used for purposes of revision. It is well written, and in a style that cannot fail to make it attractive to young pupils. It is not too compressed, and the author has not forgotten that the historical perspective of young students is very different from those more advanced.

The book is not a *précis* of a larger work; it is constructed thoughtfully and by an educationist for class purposes.

The story is continually brightened by extracts from diaries, quotations from memoirs whenever an impression is felt to be more valuable than merely a piece of information. In other words, the author has always remembered for whom she is writing, and has remembered too that there is a science of education, and that the essential thing in teaching lies in the presentation of a subject rather than in the information imparted.

THE STORY OF THE EAST COUNTRY. By E. S. Symes. (Arnold. 1s. 6d.)

A sort of "first guide-book" to the Fen Country; it is illustrated, and the story is sufficiently interesting to make the book an excellent reader in schools situated near the places described.

A SOURCE-BOOK OF ROMAN HISTORY. By Dana C. Munro. (Heath. 5s.)

SOURCE-BOOK is a much more dignified title than "Selections from Roman Histories," though the latter title is more faithfully descriptive. In addition to these selections, each chapter contains an ample list of books to which the student is referred for further information. This list is drawn up very carefully, and to teachers wishing to furnish the school library must prove very useful. The references are to chapter and page, so that if one wishes to read what has been said on the "Misrule of the Optimates," no time is lost in searching through the volume indicated, as the relevant matter is instantly located.

The illustrations, too, are representations from statuary and buildings, and are not artistic improvisations, drawn to enliven the text.

Such a book is invaluable to the student, and the teacher of Roman history cannot afford to ignore it. Some of the extracts are of great interest, and we cannot refrain from giving a quotation from a boy's letter to his father. The passage is taken from a translation of the Oxyrhynchus papyri:

"Theon to his father Theon, greeting. It was a fine thing of you not to take me with you to the city! If you won't take me with you to Alexandria, I won't write you a letter nor speak to you nor say good-bye to you; and if you go to Alexandria, I won't take your hand nor ever greet you again. . . . Send me a lyre, I implore you. If you don't I won't eat, I won't drink; there now!"

The schoolboy is at heart the same in all ages and in all climes.

HISTORY OF ROME, 44 B.C.-138 A.D. By A. H. Allcroft and J. H. Haydon. (Tutorial Press. 3s. 6d.)

As this volume is in the third edition and is enlarged

(though in the absence of a preface we cannot tell where the new matter has been inserted) we may conclude that students reading for the London Arts degrees have found it helpful.

A SHORT HISTORY OF ANCIENT EGYPT. By Percy E. Newberry and John Garstang. (Constable. 3s. 6d. net.)

THE value of this history lies in its rejection of the traditions of historians unless their assertions are verified by the evidence of the monuments. "It has been," write the authors, "our aim to make no statement which does not rest upon the substantial basis of fact"—a sufficient justification for this little work, and separating it from the numerous histories compiled from unverified data. This method, though it does not rule out differences in interpretation, gives the reader a sense of security and the conviction that he is walking on sure foundations.

THE TOPOGRAPHY AND MONUMENTS OF ANCIENT ROME. By Samuel B. Platner. (Allyn & Bacon.)

THE student will find it easy to rebuild Rome by the aid of this work, that must have cost the writer much labour and thought. The volume is well illustrated, and contains numerous maps and plans. The early chapters discuss sources of information, general topography, history and development, bridges, aqueducts, walls, gates, &c.; later chapters deal with the monuments, illustrations frequently showing both the ruin and the building as restored.

With such a guide-book, and imagination vivid enough to re-people its streets, the student may know more of ancient Rome than the Romans themselves.

A PRIMER OF GENERAL HISTORY. Part I. By W. H. Salter. (Marshall. 2s. 6d.)

It seemed at one time that geography was going to crush out history. Geography could point to exhibitions held in its honour, to innumerable societies having for their object its natural and higher development. But history could not permanently be refused its rights, for it is a "human" subject in a more intimate sense than geography; and man cannot, however powerful the glamour of science or of the purely ratiocinative subjects, resist the imaginative pleasures of the stories our fathers have left us. History is about *persons*, and for that reason alone, no matter what our view may be of its function or of the way in which it ought to be taught, it will always have for many an absorbing interest.

The new feature of this little book is its inclusion of a short account of the civilisation of Egypt and Babylon, continuing the story up to the sack of Rome in 410. As this is only part i., we shall be interested in part ii., because it must treat of centuries that are almost entirely unknown, not only to schoolboys, but even to most educated people.

Very few of the illustrations are by modern artists—that is, they are real representations of monuments, sculptures, vases, &c. The rough maps at the end of the book are better than more detailed and finished ones.

THE ANCIENT WORLD. By E. M. Wilmot-Buxton. (Methuen. 3s. 6d.)

As far as we know, Mr. Wilmot-Buxton is the first to recognise that the history of Egypt and Assyria is a poor thing for school children unless it is supplemented by illustrations and visits to the British Museum. Accord-

ingly, in this volume reference is constantly made to objects in the British Museum. Our regret is that the author has not carried out this idea more adequately. He has, however, shown the way, and we doubt not that before long we shall have a child's guide to the museums, which will contain just so much history as is necessary to endow the objects with meaning.

DEFOE'S JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE.

SIR RICHARD HAWKINS'S VOYAGE INTO THE SOUTH SEA.

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(Blackie. 8d. each.)

THESE books will make excellent readers. They are clearly printed, and contain short introductions. The margins are rather skimpy.

THE TUTORIAL HISTORY OF GREECE. By W. J. Woodhouse, M.A. (University Tutorial Press. 3s. 6d.)

A SHORT history, but adequate and accurate; an excellent introduction for students. The story is clearly told, giving a good picture of Greek history and civilisation. A book worthy of recommendation.

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. By Hereford B. George. (Methuen. 3s. 6d.)

ALTHOUGH this book is not a school text-book, yet it is well that a review of it should find a place in the Education Supplement of *THE ACADEMY*, for every teacher of geography should be familiar with its argument and method. English people like to imagine that their dominance in the world is due entirely to their racial characteristics; but Mr. George clearly exposes the defects of this assumption. Let race-theorists ponder this statement:

"It is easy to talk of the Renaissance kindling a thirst for knowledge, of the Reformation creating religious independence, of Englishmen sharing the blood of Norse rovers. And it is reasonable to infer that the Renaissance helped to form Shakespeare and Bacon, that the Reformation was congenial to a people who already had some measure of political freedom. The problem still remains, why the heritage of Norse blood, hitherto inoperative, should suddenly have become active; why the new spirit which was working all over Europe should have taken this special form in England."

Not only in this passage but in numerous others does the writer drive home the fact that it is impossible to understand history in terms of history alone: the climate of a country, its food supply, physical features, the extent of its seaboard and its position in the world are elements of enormous significance in determining the future of a people.

The teacher whose outlook is bounded by the ordinary text-book may learn, by reading no further than the first hundred pages, how necessary it is that geography should be read concurrently with history. Not otherwise can the economic teaching of history be appreciated. If this book serves only to induce a teacher here and there to re-read his history in the light of its teaching, Mr. George has not written in vain; but his volume has a higher function; it will be valued by many for the detailed application of its principles to the history of our Empire, even though they should find nothing fresh in its main thesis.

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mother tongue is known another language becomes superfluous; it follows, therefore, that any language other than the mother tongue must be acquired artificially. The problem then is no longer essentially a linguistic one; it has become psychological, and, in brief, may be stated as follows: how can an alien language be learnt so that during its acquisition the purposive activities may not be checked? It is admitted that a second language can never be learnt as the mother tongue; but, for all that, there may be a method by which the second language may be acquired as naturally as the first. Dr. Jespersen does not directly discuss this question, but he is too excellent a teacher to miss its drift and make us feel weak points, both in practice and theory.

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Mathematics

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work of constructing figures will bring the pupils well within range of proof, even where none is given or asked for, for the exercises are planned purposely to break down, little by little, the difficulty of passing from a particular to a universal demonstration.

The early part of the book advances easily; but this cannot be said of the later chapters, where the progress is too rapid for the average beginner. For instance, the student is plunged straightway into an algebraical proof of the Pythagorean theorem without any preliminary survey or preparatory work. Similarly, in the case of rectangles made by the segments of intersecting chords, the learner is thrust on to the proof when he should have been led by purposive exercises to suspect the relation and anticipate the demonstration. We could give other instances showing how, though a good book, it is marred by an overhaste to cover an arbitrarily prescribed field.

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- (5) **AN INTRODUCTION TO BOTANY.** By Professor W. C. Stevens. (Heath & Co. 4s. 6d.)

(1) By Nature-study is meant the haphazard study of Nature. Just as a man does not sit idle whilst waiting for a friend if there are books about, so in field and wood, by running water, in a garden, there is always something to look at. Observation is the faculty that goes longest with us, and, unless our endowment is very poor indeed, our eyes will always find something for our brains to do. Anyway, we *must* look at something—the best part of our conscious life. These descriptions of what others have seen are given in the hope, presumably, that the young reader will take the hint, and observe things for himself. Children are observant; but for some reason not yet explained this power of observation frequently atrophies as manhood

approaches. Whether it is that "man," after school-days are over, absorbs the whole field of observational interest no one can say.

Can this interest in animal and plant life, in shells and stones, be kept fresh? It is the question which the naturalist teacher puts to himself. Children love to watch, to handle and to experiment with natural objects when once interest has quickened their activity and directed their search. Without purposiveness in looking, however, the desire may fail, and the eager joy of the child in finding a lizard, a beetle or a caterpillar may find no echo in the emotions of the more aesthetic young man or woman.

Theories are not wanted; the idea of Nature-study, both here, on the Continent and in America, is much too young for any theory on the best way of encouraging this study to be definitive.

Experience must point the way; meanwhile let us welcome Mr. Medd's Readers; they may supply some of that purposiveness without which we must remain passive, though all about us Nature is singing her wondrous songs.

(2) THE "Eton Nature-Study" is a book of exercises, planned so as to speak in imagined collaboration with the potential naturalist. The aim of the authors seems to be to give just as much help as is necessary, and, but for the fact that they cannot both tell and withhold a suggestion, their directions would have been far less definite, and much more would have been left to the imagination.

The illustrations are very well done—too well done, one feels sometimes—but should have included rough sketches: they bring out the truth that drawing and photography are the mnemonics of vision as well as its test.

(3) It has been suggested that text-books should be constantly written up by turning obsolescent theories into history garners and replacing them by current views. Such a course would make the work of lecturing more effective, and would obviate the tediousness of explaining orally what could as easily be understood and better remembered from the printed page. The lecturer could then turn his lecture into a consultation room, and, instead of doling out to all a like fare, he would feed his flock according to their needs, and would prescribe what was best for each.

In the case of a mere text-book much can be said for this proposal; but where a book is not only a treasury of information, but is also a piece of fine literary workmanship, then we should insist that the work of the revisor should be clearly indicated, and that asterisks should show the places of excised passages. No sentence of the original must be altered. Fresh matter should be put within square brackets or in different type.

This is how we should have liked to see Huxley's "Physiography" treated. Professor Gregory has revised and partly rewritten it, and he confesses that "the central idea of the present volume has been transferred from the Thames to any river-basin"—how Huxley would have shuddered at that sentence!—so the reader is left to distinguish between the hand of the master and that of his restorer.

(4) MR. PERRY'S "Physiography" has been written for candidates preparing for a certain examination, and the problem seems to have been how much information can be stowed away in the least possible number of pages. Chapter XI. strikes us as being a feat in compression, but, unfortunately, the compression is in inverse ratio to the interest. A good book for its purpose, but almost devoid of educative value.

(5) PROFESSOR STEVENS has arranged this course of experimental botany for schools, and thinks, where "comprehensive and thorough work is done," there is sufficient material for a year's work.

It is a Gargantuan mouthful, and we suspect, in those English schools in which botany is made the principal science subject, very few, for all their three or four years' course, could boast of knowing all that is in half of this volume—that is, knowing as Professor Stevens wishes them to know, from experiment and observation. But this is no dispraise; it is quite easy for the intelligent teacher to pick out the easy portions and leave the other over for a second reading. As a compromise between the heuristic method and the dull "tell-all" thing that passed for botany not so many years ago, this course can be commended.

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To the uninitiated it may seem strange that there are Principles of Economics, for no sooner is it urgent that a tax be imposed or some change made in its incidence than the army of politicians splits into sections, and in the war of words and statistics the bewildered young economist can find no principle that exactly applies to the particular case. The general rule looks so self-contained in the text-book—like a cradled baby—that it is with a shock that he discovers its inapplicability. But such shocks must needs come to the student of any of the social sciences, and if his general rule does not apply it may be that the rule is too general, covers too wide a field, is, in short, too abstract, and there is nothing for it but to amend the rule, or to combine it with other apparently conflicting rules.

The economist must, however, work by rules, and such a book as this, though here and there it is marred by a too formal treatment, is a reminder that, however imperfect, elusive and self-contradictory the principles are, he can never relax his search for them without ceasing at that moment to be a politician.

Each chapter concludes with a summary, questions on the text, and, most valuable of all, suggestions for further reading. The questions might have been thrown into a more interesting form; as they stand they can be answered straight from the text.

One advantage of pursuing the subjects treated of in other volumes will be to destroy the authority of many a conclusion. For instance, it is important to distinguish between a right conferred by law (*Gesetz*) and moral right (*Recht*); but we question very much whether the young student would realise the ambiguity of the English word "rights," as used in pages 9 and 10. Again, although the authors discuss Socialism with conspicuous fairness, it is a *suggestio falsi* to ask a beginner such a question as "What effect would Socialism, if successful, have on production?" Such a question is simply unanswerable without a definition of "Socialism," and, with the definition, it is impossible to reconcile conflicting inferences; therefore the question is not merely otiose, it is actively harmful.

Theological

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We have space for a selection chosen to show the spirit in which the book is written. "Some little while after they had founded their kingdom, their ancient songs began to be gathered (after 1100 B.C.) (Num. xxi. 14; Josh. x. 12). Later again, by about two hundred years, the stories of the national origins were written down. The earliest history of the old days was composed in the Southern Kingdom. In the Northern Kingdom a similar history was compiled out of Northern traditions about a century later. These two histories a later editor united into one; and the greater part of the united history we now find, with other matter, in the first six books of the Bible. This united history dwells much on the sacred rites of Palestine, the old sacred trees and altars, the sacred pillars, the walls and sanctuaries, the old camping-grounds. No traditions are ever quite the same in two places; so we need not be surprised to find that the two parallel histories differ in details." And there are many who will call such teaching heretical!

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(3) "But no indication is given of the apostle's beliefs regarding the manner in which the Incarnation was effected; but this he had not, as far as we can tell, inquired more closely into than is indicated in Rom. i. 2, 3, 4." These instances will suffice to indicate the security with which these biographical sketches may be read.

Various

PREPARATION OF THE CHILD FOR SCIENCE. By M. E. Boole. (Oxford. 2s.)

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